

**RHODE ISLAND PUBLIC TRANSIT AUTHORITY
STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MAY 6, 2010 MEETING**

Board Members Present: Edward Field; Vice Chair; Stephen Devine; Everett Stuart; Kevin Flynn; Stephen Durkee; and John Flaherty.

Absent: Thomas Deller; William Kennedy; Christopher Long; and Stephen Farrell.

Also Present: Alfred Moscola; Mark Therrien Anne Galbraith; and Ellen Mandly and members of the public whose names are on the meeting sign-in sheet.

Mr. Field called the meeting to order at 8:35 and asked if the Committee had an opportunity to review the minutes of the meeting held March 4, 2010. The members indicated they had and Mr. Field and Ms. Galbraith suggested two minor changes which they gave to Ms. Mandly. Mr. Flynn made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting held April 19, 2010 with the suggested changes. Mr. Devine seconded the motion and the minutes of the meeting were unanimously approved.

Mr. Field referenced the challenges and opportunities and blueprint documents and suggested that Ms. Galbraith cover the salient points of those documents. He opined that the mission and vision

statement should come after the goals and objectives are determined.

He asked if Ms. Galbraith would begin with a review of the challenges and opportunities in order to determine where we are going. He said it seems RIPTA has grown to fill needs and done a good job serving the people with minimal financing. He wondered how we will meet the demands of increased ridership if the increased marketing of RIPTA is successful. Mr. Field said we need to consider what it will cost to grow the system and who will pay for it and plan from there.

Ms. Galbraith agreed that there was a lot of material to cover and today's goal today is not to come up with a definite mission, but rather to look at the types of materials that go into a strategic plan and go over goals and visions previously developed by the Authority.

She said as the Committee goes through the process in the coming months we'll get into more detail and determine our needs by the end of the process and have a much clearer idea of what the vision, mission and goals and objectives should be.

Ms. Galbraith began by giving a brief overview of the March 4th meeting and then distributed sample copies of strategic plans developed by four different transit agencies which she found on the internet. She discussed the common themes in the plans and highlighted some ideas she liked. Ms. Galbraith said it is important that RIPTA make a big splash and invest in marketing when the goals and mission is presented so the public is aware that RIPTA is changing. The Committee discussed the four plans and Ms.

Galbraith answered questions.

Next she discussed the timeline in the blueprint for RIPTA's future and said the goal is for a fall completion date. Mr. Durkee said having the metro study completed is an advantage and fall is a reasonable goal. Ms. Galbraith suggested to the Committee that at the next meeting they brainstorm all the ideas and actions needed and then group these into general goals.

A discussion was held on how to condense the draft 3-page vision and mission statement into just a few lines as is the common practice and how the four sample plans from other transits handled this issue.

Mr. Devine asked if our draft mission came from the Metro Study and Ms. Galbraith described the Metro Study process and how RIPTA's mission statement from the 90's was developed, but never formally adopted by the Board. She said that close to 3-years ago the legislature gave RIPTA an entirely new mandate and identified them as the State's mobility manager but there has been no public marketing effort or statement by RIPTA to define what that means.

She said the mission statement will define what we are supposed to be doing now that we are the mobility manager, the vision statement will define where we want to be in 5 or 10 years (or whatever length of time the Committee decides) and the goals and objectives will determine the specific actions needed to get there. She said each

goal and objective should be assigned to a specific RIPTA staff person who should be tasked with bringing it to fruition.

A discussion of various current and future goals and objectives was held including a discussion of RIPTA crossing state lines and changing the current legislation restricting same, becoming a regional provider, the 10 tasks identified in the metro transit study, commuter rail, and school and human services transportation. The members also discussed what the term mobility manager means and what it encompasses.

In the blueprint document at challenge # 2 Mr. Field noted that mention is often made of the Aquidneck Island Planning Commission and studies they have undertaken and he wondered if other areas of the state had similar planning commissions. Mr. Therrien said groups in the northern and southern parts of the state have been formed and expressed interest in getting on board with RIPTA to develop new initiatives and he gave examples. Mr. Flynn said Aquidneck Island has a substantial grant acquired through DOT and briefly discussed same.

Mr. Field said we need to identify opportunities to develop grants for other regions and assist them in acquiring same and Mr. Flaherty described a current initiative by the Blackstone Valley region to acquire a study grant. Mr. Flynn discussed the issue of Blackstone Valley encompassing both RI and MA.

Next Mr. Field asked about challenge # 3 changing demographics and growing demand for on-demand transit and a lengthy discussion ensued that veered into a discussion of RIPTA's Ride and Flex programs and human services transportation.

Ms. Galbraith moved onto challenges and opportunities document and asked if anyone had anything to add to the draft document. Noting that this document is rather long she said she intends this to become a chapter in the RIPTA handbook and future documents she authors will have this look. Mr. Durkee discussed the issue of the public perception of RIPTA being a challenge and said it's a national issue. He added that we need to begin pushing the general assembly for additional funding immediately.

Mr. Flaherty gave an update on the three bills introduced by the CTC and pending in the general assembly and described each and CTC's actions to move them forward. Mr. Flaherty also discussed the forum held at the RI Foundation and positive comments made at that event by elected officials. Mr. Flaherty answered questions regarding the bills and listened to suggestions and then discussed a hearing scheduled for May 11th where the bills will be discussed and asked that the Committee members try to attend.

A brief discussion was held on addressing long term funding. Mr. Field noted that public transit riders are subsidized by everyone

paying taxes. Mr. Flaherty asked if an analysis comparing the state subsidy for transit with the state subsidy for highway and bridges would be useful noting the broad perception that transit is subsidized but the public is not aware that all transit infrastructures is subsidized. The committee discussed this and said this information publically available and decided to put the links to this information on the RIPTA website.

At this point Mr. Durkee left the meeting and Ms. Galbraith asked that the Committee members to send her comments on the four strategic plans she distributed.

Mr. Flynn interjected that he has an issue with zoned fares which he feels are unfair to those traveling short distance and said with the technology available today it should be possible to implement of system of zones. Mr. Devine added that the Governor's peer review supported premium service from park and rides with an increased fare. Mr. Field added that ideally the system should be connected to the farebox in such a way as to allow the rider to use a debit card that can be automatically reloaded.

Mr. Stuart asked if RIPTA has a newsletter to better communicate with riders. Mr. Moscola said there is no newsletter but information is given via the website and public hearings. Mr. Stuart suggested that the RIPTA website be advertised on the bus.

There being no further business Mr. Field asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Flaherty made a motion to adjourn the meeting, the motion was seconded by Mr. Everett and the meeting was unanimously adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen M. Mandly

Recording Secretary